

3.4 Clunie Lake Road Upgrades

USAG-AK has proposed to upgrade Clunie Lake Road, a dirt/gravel road that runs through training areas in the eastern portion of Fort Richardson (Figure 39). The purpose of upgrades along Clunie Lake Road is to improve the existing road and to re-establish hardened road surfaces and drainage features including crowns, slopes, ditches, water bars and culverts. This will include grading, ditching, installing geotextile and placing fill material. This road is currently characterized by poor drainage, insufficient and inappropriate road base and cap material, rutting and large erosion features, which impede access. No road widening will occur and all work will be confined to hardened surfaces. This project is located on map quadrangles ANC B7, T15N, R2W, Sections 22, 27 and 34; ANC B8, T15N, R2W, Sections 33 and 28.

Surveys and Inventory

In June 2005 USAG-AK cultural resources staff reviewed the proposed project and the existing literature on cultural resources within the Fort Richardson cantonment area. In June 2005 a portion of the project area was pedestrian surveyed by a crew of 4-5 archaeologists employed by the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML, Colorado State University). Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, was the supervising archaeologist for this project. Survey work within the project area was also undertaken in the summers of 2002 and 2003 by CEMML archaeologists (supervised by William Hedman and Kirsten Andersen, respectively).

Parallel pedestrian transects spaced at 20 meters or less were walked in all areas that were not deemed too wet or too steep ($>40^\circ$) to contain cultural material. Systematic sub-surface testing was undertaken in areas determined to be high probability (e.g., lake margins, ridges, benches adjacent to steeper slopes) during initial review of the proposed project area, and as determined by the supervising archaeologist and field crew leader based on survey findings. In addition to pedestrian transects, 40cm x 40cm shovel tests were excavated in the project area. None of the shovel tests excavated throughout the project area contained any cultural material.

The entire length of Clunie Lake Road has been archaeologically surveyed for at least 100 meters on both sides, with one exception. From the "four corners" intersection for approximately 500 meters south, along the east side of the road, has not been archaeologically surveyed. This small portion was not surveyed due to access issues. All upgrade activities here, as along the rest of the road, will be confined to hardened surfaces and no widening will occur.

Cultural Resources

No National Register eligible cultural resources were located during any of the survey activities in 2002, 2003 or 2005. AHRs maps at the Office of History and Archaeology indicate that a segment of the Iditarod National Historic Trail may have run through a portion of the project area. This segment of the trail currently has no AHRs number (personal communication with Mary Hermon, 12/28/05). The possible route of the trail found on AHRs maps differs from that of Clunie Lake Road. Additionally, no evidence of the trail was noted through pedestrian survey or shovel testing.

Results

Pedestrian survey and shovel testing throughout the project area did not identify any National Register eligible cultural resources along, or in the vicinity of, Bulldog Trail.

USAG-AK has determined that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project.

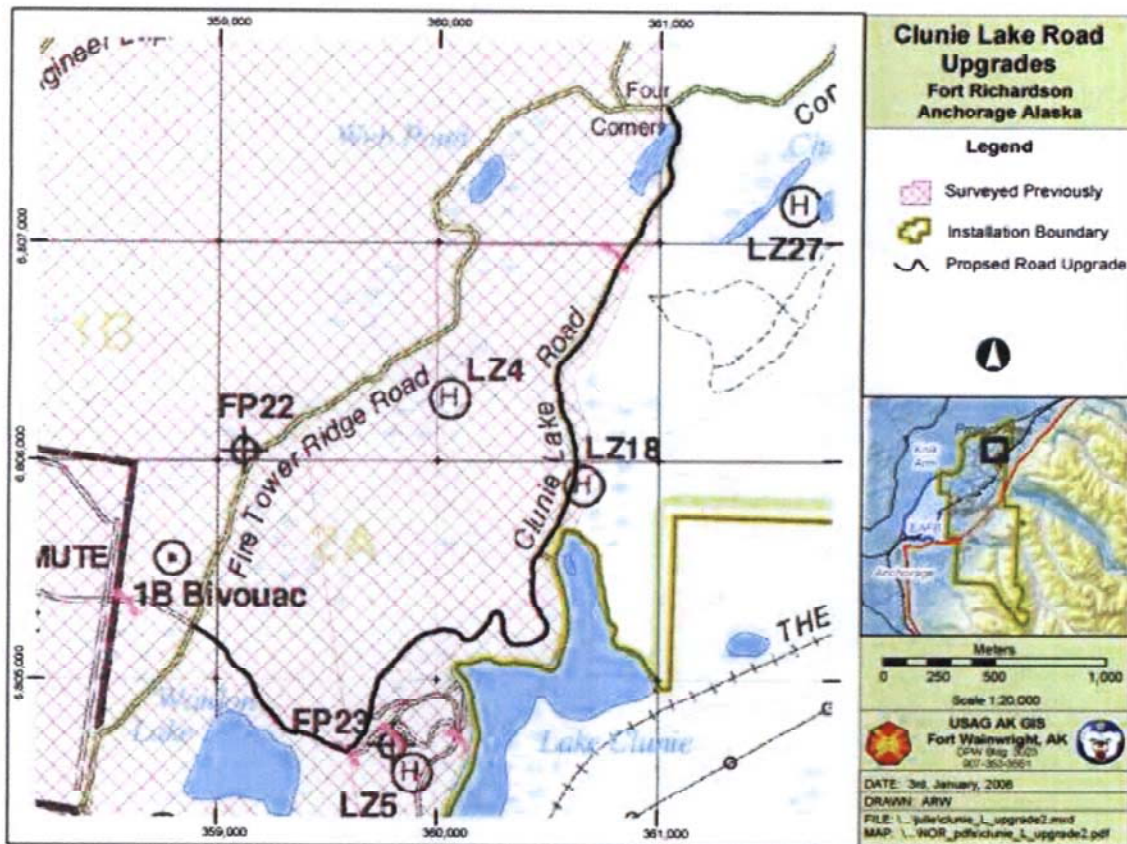


Figure 39. Project area map showing Clunie Lake Road



Figure 40. Backfilling a shovel test along Clunie Lake Road